



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

October 2012

Reality PD

A Video Library of Great Teaching



How does DCPS define great teaching?

The DCPS Teaching and Learning Framework



Teach 1: Lead well-organized, objective-driven lessons

Teach 2: Explain content clearly

Teach 3: Engage students at all learning levels in accessible and challenging work

Teach 4: Provide students multiple ways to move toward mastery

Teach 5: Check for student understanding

Teach 6: Respond to student understanding

Teach 7: Develop higher-level understanding through effective questioning

Teach 8: Maximize instructional time

Teach 9: Build a supportive, learning-focused classroom community

“SHOW us what you mean by great teaching.”

- A response to teachers’ request
- 80 videos of quality teaching practices
- 35 DCPS teachers from across the city
- Variety of grade levels and subject areas
- Filmed in Spring 2011, launched in Fall 2012
- Produced by award-winning filmmakers
- Made possible through a grant from the DC Public Education Fund and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation



What does each clip provide?

- 4-12 minutes of effective and highly effective teaching practices, vetted by content specialists and school leaders
- Showcase of one Teach standard from the DCPS Teaching and Learning Framework (TLF)
- A written description of the quality teaching practices featured in the video



How do educators use the clips?

- Integrate featured methods into their own best practices toolbox
- Engage in collaborative dialogue with colleagues
- Review videos as part of a learning cycle with instructional coaches
- Search for a particular interest:
 - Teach standard
 - Subject or grade level
 - Specific instructional or classroom management practice



Where is the video library accessible?

- Promo and 6 clips available at:
<http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/realitypd>
and
<http://youtube.com/dcpublicschools>
- All clips available to DCPS Educators on the Educator Portal (internal website)
- Plans are underway to make more clips publically publically available and to license to third parties



The Production Process

How did we select the producers?

- We wanted to create videos that teachers would enjoy watching
 - Good audio on teachers and students
 - Good lighting
 - Seamless editing
 - No just-sticking-a-camera-in-the-back-of-the-room
- Extensive search prioritizing vendors with production know-how over educational expertise
- Selected award-winning filmmakers
 - Executive Producer: Judy Stoia
 - Production Company: Big Fish Entertainment

How were teachers selected?

- Recommendations from master educators, principals, and central office staff
- Teachers with effective and highly effective ratings
- 50 teachers invited;
35 agreed to participate
- Teachers filmed represented:
 - Every DC ward
 - Veteran and novice educators
 - A broad variety of subjects and grade levels



What did it take in terms of staffing?

DCPS

Main team

- **Project lead** (70% for 5 months; 15% for 5 months)
- **Project manager** (100% for 8 months; 50% for 2 months)
- **Logistics coordinator** (80% for 5 months)
- **Pedagogy/IMPACT expert** (15% for 3 months)
- **Grant manager from DCPEF** (15% for 3 months)
- **15 master educators** (25% for 2 months)

Executive team

- Chief of Family & Public Engagement: Film quality
- Chief of Human Capital: Content
- Chief of Transformation Management: Educator Portal
- Executive Director of DCPEF

Vetting participants

- Master educators
- Principals
- Teachers
- Instructional coaches

Big Fish Entertainment

- **Executive Producer**
- **Lead day-to-day producer**
- **Production/logistics coordinator**
- **2 film crews** (each crew: 1 producer, 2 camera operators, 1 audio operator, 1 assistant)
- **2 writers**
- **2 video editors**

For each shoot: 1 film crew + 1 DCPS project manager + 1 master educator

How did we support teachers throughout the process?

- Kick-off meeting
- Guide book for teachers
- Pre-production meeting with teacher, Reality PD team member, and producer
- Celebratory launch party



What were the “rewinds” (or lessons learned)?

- #1 priority: Know exactly what you want to film
- It takes more time than you think
 - Build in dedicated planning phase
 - Build in additional capacity
 - Vetting teachers’ strengths
 - Scheduling conflicts, snow, fire drills, etc.
- Factor in other organizational initiatives that may impact content and timeline:
 - New academic plans
 - Updates to the evaluation system
- Be vigilant about getting media releases at the time of filming
- Determine clear ownership of the videos



What were the “rewinds” (or lessons learned)?

- Vet videos with a variety of stakeholders
- Be prepared not to use 40% of rough cuts
 - Missing media releases, content issues, and changes in personnel, etc.
- Make sure the context in which the videos will go is ready
 - Know how videos fit strategically into professional development within your organization/project
 - Prepare the website, an intranet, etc.
 - Select a video host that is not blocked by the district’s filtering software
 - Be prepared to “launch” the library many times and in many contexts
- Track video usage



What were the “repeats” (or what we would do again)?

- Selecting the right expertise to guide each component of the project
- Cultivating a strong relationship with the production company
- Establishing clear points of contacts
- Prioritizing watch-ability – teachers say they appreciate the excellent video quality!
- Showcasing both effective and highly effective teachers
- Creating opportunities for master educators and principals to norm around evaluating classroom evidence
- Finding a variety of professional development uses

What were other positive outcomes of the project?

- Teachers were made to look like the rock stars they are – and they enjoyed the experience!
- DCPS built credibility and trust with teachers – especially for filming
- Reality PD has generated nationwide interest from education institutions
- Videos have been a great recruitment tool for prospective DCPS educators and students
- Videos have provided opportunities to show families what great teaching looks like and to inspire pride in their schools



Clips

Reality PD Promo Video



<http://bit.ly/realitypdpromo>

Clip: Pre-School Explain content clearly



<http://bit.ly/realitypd-teach2>

Clip: Grades 1-3 - Literacy

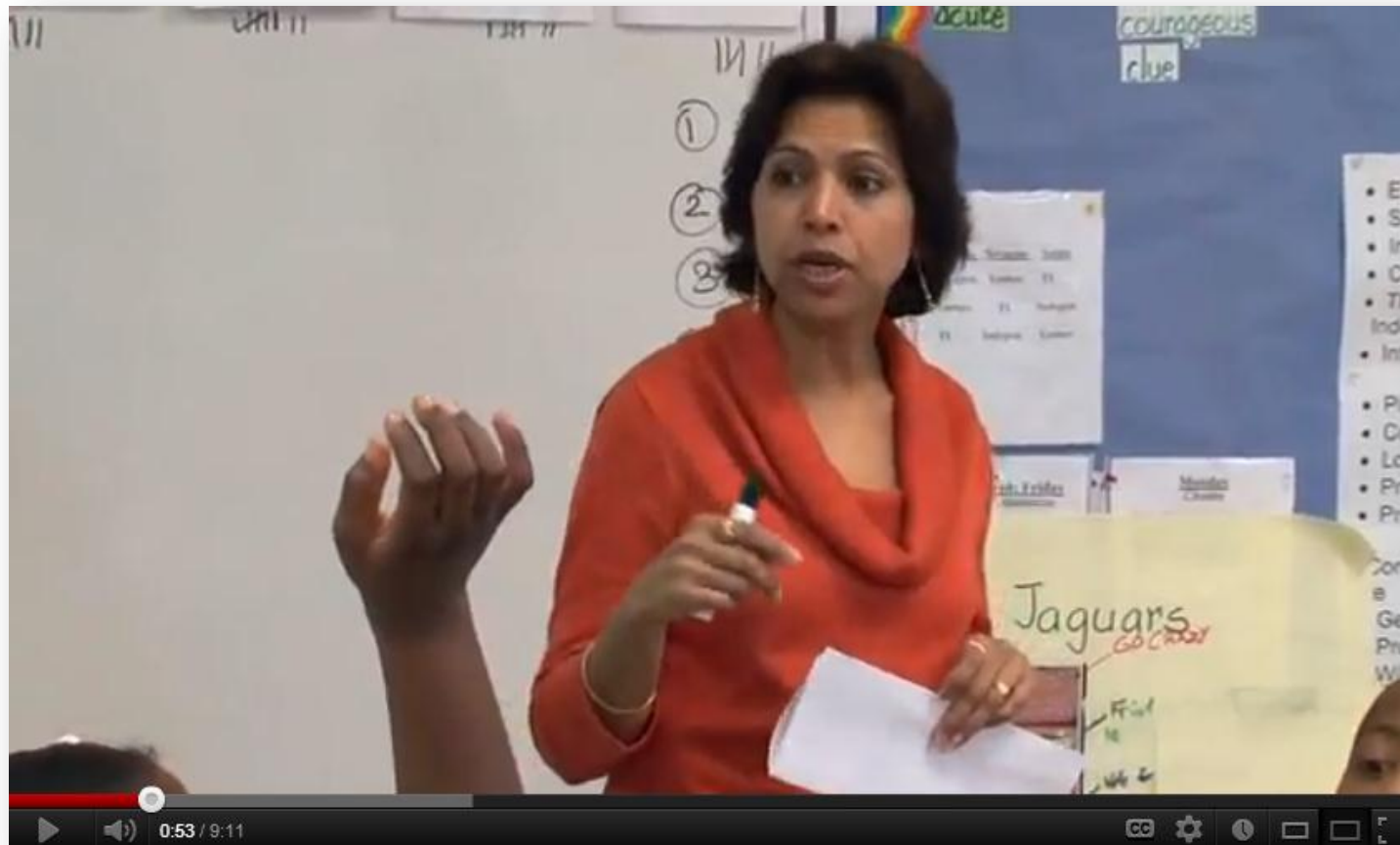
Check for student understanding



<http://bit.ly/realitypd-teach5>

Clip: Grades 4-6 – Math

Lead well-organized, objective-driven lessons



<http://bit.ly/realitypd-teach1>

Clip: Middle School Science Maximize instructional time



<http://bit.ly/realitypd-teach8>

Clip: High School English

Develop higher-level understanding through effective questioning



<http://bit.ly/realitypd-teach7>

Clip: High School Social Studies

Engage students at all learning levels in rigorous work



<http://bit.ly/realitypd-teach3>

Appendix

Reality PD

<http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/realitypd>

DCPS Teaching and Learning Framework

<http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/framework>

IMPACT

<http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/impact>

Educator Portal

<http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/educatorportalplus>

“Show and Tell for Teachers, Inspired by Reality TV”

The New York Times

Aug. 15, 2012

Link: nyti.ms/realitypd

“Videos of Top Teachers Explaining Their Craft”

The Lede Blog, The New York Times,

Aug. 16, 2012

Link: nyti.ms/realitypdblog



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For more information: <http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/realitypd>